

Bell companies operate an "essential facility", and should have to accommodate other ISP firms that wish to purchase access from them. This wholesale provisioning will stimulate competition and be of benefit to the consumers. To not do so would cripple the '96 Telecom Act. Chairman Powell: RBOCs gained their wire infrastructure under the purest monopoly conditions and it is unfair to expect other companies to capitalize their own wire infrastructure. The availability of 3rd party DSL services over phone lines \*increases\* competition to the benefit of the consumer. As a computer and Internet consultant I know that I have higher quality DSL services available through 3rd parties than I do from Verizon and Verizon would have even less incentive to be competitive if companies like Covad didn't have access to local lines.